CLAIMS

Therefore, having thus described the invention, at least the following is claimed:

1. A suture needle comprising:
a shaft, the shaft being marked at least partially with a visual indicator; and
a puncture tip at one end of the curve of the shaft.

2. The suture needle of claim 1, wherein the shaft is comprised of a front surface that is proximal the puncture tip, the front surface including a visual indicator.

3. The suture needle of claim 2, wherein the visual indicator is a color.

4. The suture needle of claim 1, wherein the shaft is comprised of a rear surface that is distal the puncture tip, the rear surface including a visual indicator.

5. The suture needle of claim 4, wherein the visual indicator is a color.

6. The suture needle of claim 1, wherein the shaft is comprised of:
a front surface that is proximal the puncture tip, the front surface including a first visual indicator; and
a rear surface that is distal the puncture tip, the rear surface including a second visual indicator;
wherein the first visual indicator is visually distinct from the second visual indicator.

7. The suture needle of claim 6, wherein the first visual indicator is a first color and the second visual indicator is a second color.

8. The suture needle of claim 7, wherein approximately the entire front surface is comprised of the first color and approximately the entire rear surface is comprised of a second color.

9. The suture needle of claim 1, wherein the suture needle aids in visual perception of the angle of orientation of the needle.

10. The suture needle of claim 1, wherein the suture needle is chosen from: a needle with a curved cylindrical shaft, a straight needle, a ski needle, a cutting needle, and a tapered needle.

11. A suture needle comprising:

a puncture tip; and

a shaft extending from the puncture tip, the shaft including means for distinguishing between a front surface of the shaft and a rear surface of the shaft.

12. The suture needle of claim 11, wherein the shaft comprises a curved cylindrical shaft extending from the puncture tip, and

wherein the means for distinguishing between a front surface that is proximal the puncture tip and a rear surface that is distal the puncture tip.

13. The suture needle of claim 11, wherein the means for distinguishing between the front surface and the rear surface is a color.

14. The suture needle of claim 11, wherein the suture needle is chosen from: a needle with a curved cylindrical shaft, a straight needle, a ski needle, a cutting needle, and a tapered needle.

15. A method of using a suture needle comprising:

inserting the suture needle into a mammal;

viewing the suture needle; and

immediately ascertaining the exact orientation of the suture needle with no manipulation of the suture needle.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the step of viewing the suture needle comprises viewing an indicator on the suture needle, where the indicator is only present on the front surface of the suture needle, proximal a puncture tip.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein the step of viewing the suture needle comprises viewing an indicator on the suture needle, where the indicator is only present on the rear surface of the suture needle, distal a puncture tip.

18. The method of claim 15, wherein the step of viewing the suture needle comprises viewing the needle on a video monitor connected to an endoscope, the endoscope being located in the mammal.

19. The method of claim 15, wherein the step of immediately ascertaining the exact orientation of the suture needle comprises determining the angle of rotation of a puncture tip on the suture needle away from a viewer.

20. A method of making a suture needle, comprising the steps of:

providing a suture needle; and

marking at least a portion of the suture needle with a visual indicator.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein the step of marking a portion of the suture needle comprises marking a surface of a shaft of the needle chosen from the front surface and the rear surface.